

Now that the April 15 deadline for filing tax returns has passed, I would actually like to ask everyone to consider a few things.

In 1900 most Americans only had to work until January 22 to fully meet all of their tax obligations to the Federal, State, and local governments. At that time the percentage of a worker's income needed to pay their taxes was just 6 percent. Imagine how much easier life would be today if we were done working for the government by the end of January.

And today, Tax Freedom Day, for most Americans doesn't come until tomorrow, April 23, as my good friend has pointed out. The deadline to fill out your tax forms, it comes and goes, and yet you're still working for the government, not for yourself, not for your business, not for your family. A third of your income goes to pay the taxes that you owe government.

Government has demonstrated an insatiable appetite to grow. In fact, Federal spending has more than tripled since 1965. Almost every week in Congress, we are asked to vote to create new programs and expand existing ones. Unless there is some urgent need, and there usually isn't, I vote "no." Americans just can't afford it anymore. Congress is not being careful enough with our hard-earned tax dollars.

The majority recently passed a budget plan that would raise taxes by \$683 billion in the next 5 years. That's the largest tax increase in American history. It requires higher taxes on married couples and small businesses. Their plan also includes no permanent fix for the alternative minimum tax that threatens unsuspecting middle income Americans to the tune of \$70 billion in new taxes.

And on the horizon are even more tax increases if Congress fails to act. Higher income tax rates and higher capital gains tax rates will hit virtually everyone. Higher dividend taxes will hit every investor. The death tax will be back, as will the marriage tax penalty. The tax credit for every child will be cut in half.

I think Congress needs to recognize that Americans are taxed too much, and that is why I am a proud cosponsor of my friend Congressman WALBERG's Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2007, which would prevent this unprecedented tax increase. Congress must make a priority of finding ways to lower the tax burden on Americans instead of increasing it. If we don't, Tax Freedom Day will soon be delayed until May or June and we will reminisce about the "good old days" when our tax debts were paid in full by April. Well, let's hope and pray that that never happens.

As a kind of a bookend here on your comments earlier about what's happening in your State, I want to let you know, Congressman WALBERG, in the State of Idaho, we're actually going the other way. This year our legisla-

ture cut the tax on personal property for businesses. We had a tax that was imposed upon the personal property that businesses owned, and that's being phased out at least at the bottom, and there will be a floor so that if you have less than \$100,000, I think was the number they settled on, worth of business property, you won't pay any property tax on that. It's not just for business, though. It's for individuals as well. And I will let you know that in Idaho we have been paying tax on the food that we buy, sales tax. This year the legislature passed a plan that would increase the deduction that's allowed against your State taxes. We call it the "Grocery Tax Credit." It will increase that significantly and will reduce the taxes that people pay on food.

This is an important concept because I have kind of a principle that I use as a test here, and it's this: If you had a dollar to put wherever you thought it would do the most good and you could pick your favorite government program or anywhere in the private sector, where do you think it would do the most good? What the legislature in the State of Idaho has said is we think it will do the most good if we leave it in the hands of individuals. It comports with the Founding Fathers, as you were referencing earlier. Unfortunately, I don't understand the thinking of your State legislature where they are going the other direction.

And I guess this represents the battle that exists within this country today. Many people say we live in a divided country. And I think that's true. And it's divided, I think, into two main categories, the first one being those who believe in the vision of the Founding Fathers, that want a government that is there to serve the people, that we will have a government that allows people to have the freedom to determine what's going to happen in their own lives, allows them the freedom to use their personal property, the wealth that they create because of that personal property to do as they see fit.

And that's opposed to the other vision, which is one that says government must do more for people. We hear that phrase on this floor regularly or some iteration of it: Government must do more. That's not what the Founding Fathers thought. This vision that government needs to do more, that somehow if the government takes control of a problem, that it will be solved. How many times have we looked at a program and said why won't this thing work? And the answer, I think, is because generally government doesn't work. That was the whole point that the Founding Fathers brought to light.

And I think there are two places where we can see kind of the underlying principles that get at these two very different visions for our country. The Founding Fathers relied on that vision that was set out in the Declaration of Independence; that when they said these words, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are cre-

ated equal" and "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights" and then later said "Governments are instituted among men" to protect those rights, that's one vision that says our rights come from God and it's government job to protect and respect those rights.

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt was, I think, addressing a press club here in Washington, DC, he described it quite differently. He described government as a contract where the people give power to the government and then the government dispenses benefits to the people. We call those things entitlements today. The vision of the Founding Fathers didn't rest at all on entitlements. They rested on rights. That vision that wants to see bigger government, government's securing a solution for every problem—

Mr. WALBERG. Reclaiming my time, if I could just pose a question on that, why would you say that government should not be flexible and mobile enough in order to deal with the changing of times? The right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness was the envisionment of the Framers of this wonderful country, this wonderful system of government as well. But as time went on and problems developed with a much larger country, what would you answer to the person who says we should be mobile and we should be flexible to meet the needs of people as it develops? I pose that to you knowing, I think, what your answer will be.

I yield to the gentleman.

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Mr. SALI. Well, again, I thank the gentleman. It begins with your vision of the principles that underlie your vision for how you want government in this country to exist. If you have a vision that says the principles can change over time, essentially that the truth can be molded over time, that there is not absolute truth, then you don't have to have that vision of the Founding Fathers. Everything can change. Up can be down if you go far enough with that.

The principles over time that change will lead you to a point where you can move from that vision of the Founding Fathers, where they said that freedom is the thing that matters the most, where liberty is the thing that matters the most. That those rights that are given by God, it is the obligation of government, and the reason that government exists is to protect those rights. If you can change those principles, you can end up with a government that will take care of you and do everything for you, and your rights don't matter at that point. It's not the government's job to protect your rights that are God-given, it's government's job to give you those rights. Again, we call those entitlements.

At the end of the day, when I talk to people who live in my State, what they want is they want a future for their kids and their grand kids, where they